Full Length Research Paper

Myths in education: A Kenyan perspective

Mwaka Marcella*, Wambua B. Kyalo, Misia Kadenyi and Kegode George

Moi University, School of Education, P.O. Box 3900 - 30100, Eldoret – Kenya.

In every culture and generation, hard work and virtue are regarded as passport to material success. African cultures are inherently ingrained with myths about work. The purpose of this article was to establish how curriculum is derived from myths and whether the contents of myths are directly or indirectly related to propensity to work and development of virtue. The article adopted an exploratory/descriptive approach. It attempted to treat the concept of myths and critically examined the role played by the perpetuation of myths; examples given were greatly borrowed from Kenya. It also looked at the relationship of "hard work and virtue leading to material success" and "myths". The article therefore addressed itself to the questions: Is it right to treat the belief that hard work and virtue lead to material success as a myth? Why would such a belief be imaginative? What myths are identifiable in our school curriculum today – and are they necessarily bad, and are they avoidable? In this paper, attempts were made to provide answers to these questions. The article began by stating the nature of myths. In view of the nature, it looked at the question: Hard work and virtue lead to material success – Is it a myth? It also treated the issue of the role of myths in education and gave examples of myths that have been perpetuated in our schools. Other issues that were also discussed in this paper are the dangers and advantages of using myths. At the end of the discussion on the various specified issues, the authors concluded that myths play an important role in education and if education is to retain its credibility, myths require constant review to reflect changing curriculum contexts.

Key words: Myths, virtue, hard work.

INTRODUCTION

Myths are socially or culturally accepted stories about 'reality' that people have constructed over time. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (3rd edition) expresses this idea when it defines a myth as a story, handed down from olden times especially concepts or beliefs about the early history of a race, explanations of natural events, such as the seasons, persons or thing, etc., that is imaginary, fictitious, or invented. Individuals within a culture, such as education, may begin to share similar meanings. This 'cultural story' then becomes the prevailing myth. The myth is 'true' only to the extent that it accurately mirrors life within the culture.

The 19th Century school curriculum was described by Taba (1962) as being filled with fictitious narratives such as the belief that hard work and goodness (or excellence) would lead to material success. In other words, a person who displayed goodness and/or excellence and hard work was bound to be wealthy. This is a world of imagi- nation as far as education takes place in a culture that is dynamic. This article seeks to answer the possible question as to whether the same would be said of the 21st century school curriculum in Kenya. The experience of life within that culture is informed by new advances and new knowledge. The original myths are not so quickly updated and remain the 'story' to which those within the culture compare their experience. In the case of education, new and imaginative approaches (e.g. problem solving, discussion, and learner-centred participatory techniques) need to be developed to maintain the vitality of the educational system to overcome the failure of the school to interest and motivate all groups of learners [Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 1979].

Nature of myths

A myth is irrational and believed. Wrong statements can be refuted by evidence, faculty deductions can be subjected to the litmus test for logic, but a myth is exempt from all this. One does not have to prove anything, sim-

---
*Corresponding author. E-mail: marcellakm@yahoo.com. Tel.: +254 722 507 909.

ply state what is 'known'. A myth imposes a logic of its own. It has the power not only to explain how things are, but also to give them an apparent justification. Myths survive not because they are true but because they are emotionally satisfying aids to contentions which are difficult or even impossible to justify on coldly rational grounds. As Combs (1979) states, myths contain a 'germ' of truth, they come institutionalized and therefore exempt from question. Therefore, questioning myths open a person to ridicule.

Myths are stated, not argued, believed, and not demonstrated. They shore up a case, not illuminate one, they pre-sent an issue but do not give details as to why things are as they are presented. Some myths have some element of truth in them, just enough to suggest that we are in the realm of fact, but not enough to bear the weight of the interpretation placed on them. Once a culture or social institution has adopted a myth, it is very robust and difficult to dislodge.

A myth does not flourish without reason. Classical myth, for instance, long outlived any literal belief due to its convenience as a framework, as conceptual shorthand, as an emotional comforter or as embellishment in literature. Myths express a social dialectic. They transmit truths that are more general – they manipulate these truths according to the modalities of sensory perception, and transpose them onto a concrete plane. They justify our preferred behaviours and constrain others. Combs (op cit) asserts that people can always find good reasons in their myths for the things they had rather do (or not do). Myths assume a double function thus they bring fact to light, and contribute to the creation of ideals.

Why use myths?

A myth is a deliberate moralization of the master ideas which cannot be put at the disposal of anyone at any time. The use of a myth in this case moralizes the idea of working hard and displaying virtue. A myth, by the virtue of being an emotionally satisfying aid to a contention which is difficult or even impossible to justify, provides a learner with a reason, rational or not, for eliciting the specified behaviour. A myth is believed; due to this simplicity in believing, it is appropriate for use in education. One does not have to prove anything nor is it necessary to demonstrate fact.

Myths are used because they are an effective vehicle for creating attitudes and because they also communicate the ideals of the education system in a colourful manner. In view of the belief that hard work and virtue lead to material success, the authors look at hard work as being a means to the desired end which is material success. Myths are used because they set a challenge to the learner; this challenge calls for a response, which in turn modifies a social or educational situation. They are also used because they constitute a first stage of learning (Erny, 1981).

In simple terms, myths communicate the relationship between the learner and his/her world. The myths are also easy to illustrate and impart on the learners. For example, a verse extracted from Freire (op cit) is to be memorized by students:- "John already knows how to read. Look at the happiness in his face. Now John will be able to find a job." This could be a text taught during preliminary school training. It is usually illustrated with cute little houses, heart-warming, and well decorated, with smiling couples fair of face, well-nourished children sporting shoulder bags, waving goodbye to their parents on their way to school after a succulent breakfast.

Hard work and virtue lead to material success – Is it a myth?

In this section, the article treats the extent to which hard work and virtue contribute to material success. It also shows the extent to which such a belief is a myth. One may not well establish whether one will or will not have material success by working hard and being virtuous but all one has to do is to live with that belief and work hard towards a challenge posed by such a belief. Such a belief – that hard work and virtue lead to material success – is in itself emotionally satisfying, though it may not be easy to justify the claims placed thereof.

What places the belief that hard work and virtue lead to material success in such a situation as to be branded 'myth' is the massive unemployment in most countries today, including Kenya. One who has worked hard and successfully gone through an educational system, excelled, and has been awarded 'wonderful' certificates may not be as 'wonderfully' placed in employment as his certificates suggest. Some, in fact, end up being unemployed. The authors do not mean that the material success mentioned will only be achieved through employment; the person who has worked hard and excelled could as well be able to succeed materially through self-employed activities such as farming, 'jua kali' (informal sector) workshops, or establishment of a firm but the fact that he/she worked hard and excelled does not guarantee him/her the capital required to initiate such projects. This belief, therefore, can qualify as a myth as it places people in a world of imagination.

Today, the level of academic achievement does not determine the level of job placement. There are no stated job grades for people with certain academic achievements, nor are there specified salaries for certain academic achievement. Moreover, in a world where tribalism, nepotism, and corruption are rampant, one who has worked hard and excelled academically is not guaranteed a job to go with one's academic achievements. The same social evils would hinder one who has worked and excelled from getting funds that would assist one in initiating an income-generating project, which would, in turn, lead to one's material success. The belief that hard work and virtue lead to material success, therefore, is a

myth as it cannot be demonstrated.

The belief has some element of truth (just as it is for some myths) in it, just enough to suggest that we are in the realm of fact, but not enough to bear the weight of the interpretation placed on it. For some people, they have succeeded in life just because they worked hard and passed in their examinations in school and so they were able to get good jobs. Their age-mates, who joined elementary level schools with them but failed to work hard and so could not pass in their examinations are quite failures in life and cannot be compared to those who worked hard. However, there are those who do not do well in school but because they were able to get funds to initiate some income-generating project, they have amassed a lot of wealth. In this case, it is difficult to assert that hard work and virtue are a yardstick for material success. To cite another example, the authors refer to a case where one finishes university level of education and is employed in a company. In that company, he/she finds a friend who never made it to the university also working for the same company, but at a higher grade. In Kenya, in November 10th 2003 - January 15th 2004, university academic staff downed their tools pressing for a better pay package. Their counterparts in other sectors were earning far much better than them yet they are the elite of the academia.

A myth does not flourish without reason. This belief has flourished because it acts as an incentive to learners who need to know why they need to go to school and to work hard there. It is also to ensure that the learners develop a trait that is essential in life – to be good, to work hard, and to be able to produce a definite result. This belief also serves the purpose of school goal setting, where the students need to develop certain kind of behaviour such as hard work and virtue.

A myth is used as one of the ways of introducing the young to the 'light'. The light the belief in question introduces the learners to is the need to work hard and be virtuous, and the aspect of material success. This is also introducing the learner to goal setting in education. It also serves the function of creation of ideals (hard work and virtue, and what reward they bring forth).

Education is expected to benefit an individual (materially, economically, spiritually, etc) in his/her future life (Taba, 1962; Shiundu and Omulando, 1992). The only danger with this kind of 'story' is when the learner finds himself/herself going through an entire educational cycle and ends up without a job or unable to create one. The solution to this may lie in development of new and imaginative approaches to maintain the vitality of the educational system – otherwise the educational system will lose its credibility.

Role of myths in education

Since myths are emotionally satisfying aids to contentions which are difficult or even impossible to justify, they act as a motivation to the learners. The learners may feel that since hard work and virtue are a necessary condition to material success, and since they do not wish to be poor all their life, then they work hard, portray goodness, and end up excelling.

The virtues contained in the belief in question portray a kind of hidden curriculum-learners end up learning some virtues not contained in the academic syllabus. The myth also helps create an ideal of the educational system - that a learner learns to work hard and show goodness and do well in order to achieve a definite result. Such a myth also restrains the learner concerning the kind of behaviour to elicit in school; this eases an educational administrator's work as the learners already know that some behaviour do not conform to the school system. All sorts of insecurities, snobberies, vested interests and beliefs about the nature of oneself and society depend on being able to believe something about education, rational or not. This belief in question is a belief about education and it ends up influencing the learner's attitude towards himself and the society in which he lives, which affects the way he views and performs in an educational institution.

A myth can be a potent booster of prestige for a particular school or university or, by extension, a whole category (Leah, 1967). It encourages competition between various institutions and this in turn raises the standards of education. This is found particularly in inter-school or national competitions today. For example, there are cultural dance competitions, music and drama competitions, science congress, and sports competitions. These provide a forum for the learners to interact and consequently learn to appreciate one another.

A statement in the myth sets off a response which modifies the social universe, which itself then touches off a new response in the realm of myth, and so on. With regard to the belief in question, hard work and virtue will modify the social situation even in educational institution. A student who works hard and excels makes a useful contribution to the development of education.

The belief about education being dealt with mainly in this article helps the learner towards forming an attitude necessary for his/her continued effort in all levels of education. This view can be compared with Hubert's (1970) view of education when he defines education as the totality of action and influences voluntarily exercised by a human being on another human being, in principle, by an adult on a young person and oriented towards an end which consists of training the young person in various attitudes which will help him to attain the goals of his adult life. Since a myth is used as one of the ways of introducing the young to the 'light' a myth on education, especially the one on hard work and virtue introduces the learner to one of the purposes of education – to enable one to live a comfortable life, though it might not always happen. It constitutes a first stage of learning, presenting to the young in an amusing and colourful form some truths. Later, these truths presented will be differentiated

from childish imagery.

Myths serve as important material for formal education through the moral precepts and rules of conduct which they convey, often in an explicit manner; but often they leave it up to the listeners to extract the implicit content themselves or they steep them in without their being aware of it (Bell and Grant, 1974). Schools have become a device for economic and cultural reproduction and a myth such as the belief that hard work and virtue lead to material success may lead to great contributions towards this reproduction.

Education, in Freire's (1985) view, is both an ideal and a referent for change in the service of a new kind of society. As a referent for change, education represents both a place within and a particular type of engagement with the dominant society. It represents both a struggle for meaning and a struggle over power relations. It is also where meaning, desire, language, and values engage and respond to the deeper beliefs about the way nature of what it means to be human, to dream, and to name and struggle for a particular future and way of life. Such is the impression contained in the belief - hard work and virtue (struggle) and material success (way of life).

Freire (op cit) argues that educators have to work with the experiences that students, adults, and other learners bring to schools and other educational sites. An education will then need to work with the attitude a learner already has concerning hard work and virtue in education, which is a necessary input to the learning experience. A learner feels challenged by the belief and his/her goal is to appropriate its deeper meaning.

The cognitive dimensions of the literacy process must include the relationships of men with their world. The belief in question presents such as relationship (hard work and virtue on the part of the learner, and how he/she benefits from them in the world; these virtues are meant to provide him/her a better place in the world). The belief makes a learner appreciate education and work hard to attain something good. The attitude developed from the belief is therefore important in the literacy process.

Some examples of myths that have been perpetuated in our schools

Freire (op cit) and Bell and Grant (1974) have identified a number of myths perpetuated in educational systems. Some of these myths may have equally been perpetuated in Kenyan schools. In this section, the authors outline some of the myths and discuss how these have been perpetuated in 21st century schools in Kenya.

Hard work and virtue lead to material success

An old Chilean peasant once said that he was a cultured man because through work and by working he changed the world. To change the world through work, to proclaim

the world, to express it, and to express oneself are unique qualities of human being. Education at any level will be more rewarding if it stimulates the development of this radical, human need for expression. This points at the importance of a myth that lays emphasis on work, as learners need broader preparation for active social roles (OECD, 1979).

This belief can also be viewed as having been perpetuated in our schools. As stated earlier in this paper, this belief has flourished and most parents can be quoted as telling their children: "My son/daughter, work hard in school, and you will prosper." Those who operate the 'mikokoteni' (hand-pulled carts) will say that they are doing that job because they never went to school. In fact, those who do most manual work will be associated with having failed in school. Examples of cases in Kenya that raised eyebrows were one in1993 in which two graduate sisters in Nyeri were spotted roasting maize, and one in May 2004 of a graduate who was operating 'boda boda'(bicycle taxi service). According to most Kenyans, these were performing the wrong jobs for their level of education. Such thinking is in line with what Ferguson (1999) and Vavrus (2002) have critiqued in the post-colonial education in East Africa, as reflecting the myth of modernization through schooling and Western education.

Education for self-employment.

This is presented as one of the objectives of the Kenyan school curriculum (Ministry of Education, 1975; Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, June, 2002). It is a myth in that the weight of self-employment branded on the school curriculum is too heavy for what the reality is. There is some truth, of course, but there is a high rate of unemployment in Kenya, established in 2001 at 40% (CIA, 2008), although this figure may have slightly changed over the years, youth unemployment remains a critical area to be addressed (Poverty News Blog, 2007). Some graduates of the school system do not employ themselves, and do not find jobs and end up staying at home. The failure on the part of the graduates of the system to employ themselves could be attributed to certain economic or social factors, though this failure is not universal. One would therefore say that the objective is a myth, though this is a philosophy of teaching (in Tanzania). In developing a philosophy of teaching, one should ensure that it addresses both individual and societal needs, that it is based on what the society considers the best type of knowledge, and that it rests on a value-system or theory of what it considers most valuable and worth having (Otiende, 1992).

The world is divided between those who know and those who don't (that is, those who do manual work). The belief has been perpetuated in the schools today where it is expected that those who are not learned are the people who do manual work. On looking at the development of education in Kenya, one notes that Kenyans rejected the

vocational education by the whites because they felt it was not the right one for them. They needed an academic education so that they would get 'white-collar' jobs whereas the manual jobs would be taken by those who did not know (that is, those not learned).

In Kenyan schools today, students present drama during which they show people who have never gone to school as being unable to communicate in Kiswahili (national language) or English (official language), and instead speak mother tongue. They are also shown as being the doers of manual work.

University is the site of knowledge and a home of those who know

This belief, which is a myth, has been perpetuated in Kenyan schools. The former 7 - 4 - 2 - 3 and the current 8 - 4 - 4 curriculum present the last level of education as the university education. This implies that university, being the highest level of education, is the site of knowledge.

The society regards highly those who are at the university or those who have gone through the university. At the secondary school level, mock examinations are administered and those who do well are regarded as eligible for university, should they do well in the national examinations. Most teachers whose students have managed to get to the university also name them in class. They will tell their students that so-and-so was in that school, went through that same system, and made it to the university. He may also encourage the students to work hard and go to the university.

University graduations are made very ceremonial, unlike the graduations in other institutions. Most parents even think that what a university graduate has said is final, plain truth, and should not be challenged. This is in the case of parents who are not educated and feel that their children from the university know all and need no counselling.

Education is a human right for all

Right now, there is free primary and secondary education offered in public schools. However, this may be a myth and may not be accessible to all for some reasons. The teacher is expected to work in an egalitarian framework yet the society is structured and hierarchical, a thing that results in inequality and hinders access to free primary and secondary education. Cole (1970) asserts that countering inequality should be a major concern of educational systems. Distance, school changes, cultural dispositions, and gender-related limitations may restrict some eligible learners from being able to benefit from this allegedly free education.

Some parents may still wish to have their children work in order to raise money for the family's upkeep. World Bank (2001) states that poverty-related deprivation contributes to low education attainment in Africa. Poor children spend more time than other children contributing directly or indirectly to the household income. Swadener et al. (1997 and 2000) report that although primary education in Kenya is 'free', in most cases poor families and, increasingly middle class families in Kenya, cannot afford a public education. Stopsky (2008) argues that free education in Kenya is a myth. He cites the example of government funding for secondary education, where schools in urban and semi-arid areas must have a minimum of 40 students and a maximum of 45 in order to qualify for government funding. Such a requirement compounds the problem of accessibility to education.

In addition, the adverse circumstances caused by HIV/AIDS are desecrating the moral fibre and resolve of people and are pushing a large percentage of Kenya's children into the labour market. (Nation Master, 2003 - 2008) reported that an estimated 15% of Kenyan children were out of primary school in 2005; this was despite a free and compulsory primary education put in place in January 2003. There is always that belief that everyone should at least know how to read and write but this is not the reality. Distance, in addition to cultural inclinations, disease, and poverty, could serve as a constraint to some people who may wish to partake of the education, which is a right for all (Garcia et al., 2008). It is therefore a myth in our schools today.

Games are good for character

This myth is implicit in our schools today. In the schools academic calendar, there is provision for games competitions right from the school level to national level. Other activities in the school can be frozen to create time for these games' competitions and Physical Education (P. E.) is given place in the timetable, at least once a week. Some schools are also regarded as famous and good for good performance in games. Games keep the learner physically and mentally fit, and to some extent socially. He is able to appreciate the national and international outlook of things. There could be isolated cases where, through diverse interactions, those who have excelled in games have also manifested excellence in character but games appeal more to the body than to the soul and spirit (where character is built).

Examinations test ability and predict performance

In the Kenyan curriculum, a lot of importance is attached to examinations. Continuous Assessment Tests are provided for in the syllabus, though their frequency is not stated. It is assumed that a person who performs well in examinations can as well fit well in a certain job. He/she is given certificates that show his/her performance in the examinations. Teachers go as far as requesting the Kenya National Examinations Council to re-mark examinations for students who perform poorly but have been

doing well in the internal examinations. This is done besides the fact that there are other factors that affect a learner's performance at the time one sits for the examinations, therefore giving a not-so-true picture of one's potential and ability. In addition, one's ability is not only measured from a cognitive or mental perspective.

National goals of education

The national goals of education in Kenya as explained by the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE, 2002) are: To foster nationalism, patriotism and promote national unity; to promote the social economic, technological and industrial needs for national development; to promote individual development and self fulfilment; to promote sound moral and religious values; to promote social equality and responsibility; to promote respect for and development of Kenya's rich and varied cultures; to promote international consciousness and foster positive attitudes towards other nations; to promote positive attitudes towards good health and environmental protection. If all these goals can be achieved, our education system would be producing individuals who are ready to take up useful roles in the society. However, there is no appropriate form of evaluation to attest to the achievement of the same; indeed all teachers focus on academic performance which is evaluated through written tests.

Dangers of using myths in education

Taking myths seriously can be a dangerous proceeding. It can be a monumental distraction from thinking and acting rationally about education. Reliance on myths also encourages a great deal of rationalization (as opposed to reasoning), and reinforces some odd ideas about the nature of cause and effect, and the rules of logic and evidence. The ideas presented in myths could have a dash of truth, but this is not usually enough to brand it as gospel truth.

A myth is a shaky basis for action. This therefore suggests that it is risky to base a certain kind of action on the truths presented by a myth. One would end up in frustration and disappointment if one went to school, worked hard and excelled only to be through with the school system and find oneself with no job, and not able to earn a living. When a mythical schema is transmitted from one population to another, and there exist differrences of language, social organization or way of life which make the myth difficult to communicate, it begins to become impoverished and confused. But one can find a limiting situation in which instead of being finally obliterated by losing all its outlines, the myth is inverted and regains part of its precision. Most myths are therefore not universal, and educators have to be careful not to impart some kind of mythical knowledge acquired from some literature into the literacy process.

In a literacy process, care should be taken on the extent to which it relies on myths. By relying on words that transmit an ideology of accommodation, such literacy work reinforces the 'culture of silence' that dominates most people. This kind of literacy can never be an instrument for transforming the real world (Illich, 1971). If this approach does not have the necessary force in itself to fulfil at least some of the illusions it transmits to the students (such as the implicit promise that an illiterate who learns to read will now 'find a job', or if he works hard and gets good results he will have material success), sooner or later this approach will end up working against the soothing objective of the very system whose ideology it reproduces. Merely teaching people to read and write does not work miracles; if there are not enough jobs for men to work, teaching more people to read and write will not create them. Similarly, if there are no avenues to material success for everyone who does well and excels in school, hard work and virtue will not create such avenues. Consider students who worked very hard in school and got very good grades (without, of course, their analyzing what is involved in the social, economic or political context) and who can tackle well their areas of specialization. When looking for work or better jobs, they cannot find them. They, at least, understand the fallacy and impossibility of such a promise – that hard work and virtue will lead to material success.

Conclusion

In this article, perpetuation of myths and the role they play in education has been critically examined. The article has also cited examples of myths which a writer of the 21st century would identify as having been Perpetuated in our schools, their importance, and whether they are avoidable or not.

This article has also outlined the major contents of the myths. It has mentioned them, citing the importance of each. It has assessed the current school curriculum in view of the assertion by writers of the 19th century of a school curriculum replete with myths such as the belief that hard work and virtue lead to material success. The authors have given own view, and asserted that to some extent similar judgement can be made of the Kenyan school curriculum today by a writer of the 21st century.

The paper has discussed the issue of myths, which are a colourful way of putting certain concepts at the disposal of a learner. It has outlined the dangers of using myths in education and suggested that tact and strategy can be used to ensure that the learners are brought to grips with the reality without necessarily avoiding myths.

Myths are based on experiences that may be true in some contexts but not in others. As the culture or social institution changes, the contexts change. Through the accretion of new information, the mythical stories become inappropriate or outdated. They produce contradictions and inconsistencies that seem beyond resolution – and

they are, as long as the institution retains the myth. Such is the case with education. Education needs new story-tellers who will write the stories for the future.

In the authors' view, myths are not necessarily bad and since they play an important role in education, they can be perpetuated and if there is any hindrance to development of a new culture then they can be gradually expelled by use of educational mottos which should be reviewed from time to time to depict the changing economic times. Myths communicate a lot of necessary details in education – the learner's attitude that should be developed, the social and educational ideals, warnings, challenges and interest groups. As asserted by Jay and Marcus (2005), interest groups play a great role in the development of myths and should therefore form a part of who should be involved in curriculum development. Curriculum implementers should be well remunerated if they have to make a positive impact on the learner's attitude. Myths also have a tinge of truth, so an educational system or school curriculum would not be said to be misinformed.

The authors also raise the issue of the national goals of education in Kenya. The principal aim of education is to promote good citizenry (Taba, 1962; Shiundu and Omulando, 1992). However, the general perspective of education system in Kenya today seeks to have an academically excellent student. This explains why every Kenyan parent and/or guardian seeks to have their child get a place in a top "performing" school. It is arguable that this trend sets us away from the national educational goals. Emphasis on academic performance – cognitive domain at the expense of the psychomotor and the affective domains; this explains why most parents choose schools with track record of good academic performance. The goals of education in Kenya have been outlined thus: foster nationalism, patriotism, and promote national unity; promote the social, economic, technological, and Industrial needs for national development; promote individual development and self-fulfilment; promote sound moral and religious values; promote social equality and responsibility; promote respect for and development of Kenya's rich and varied cultures; promote international consciousness; promote positive attitude towards good health and environmental protection (KIE, 2002). The above goals, if achieved, can result in a liberated individual who can serve his society and enhance national development. However, the curriculum context in Kenya does not guarantee equality in the achievement of these goals. The context is characterised by regional, cultural, and economic disparities among schools, disparities in individual development, and mass enrolment in Kenyan schools. Challenge is hereby made, therefore, that the educational system re-examines forces that impinge on the achievement of the goals, and develop 'stories' relevant to the goals – otherwise they will exist as myths.

REFERENCES

Bell R, Grant NA (1974), A Mythology of British Education – A Thorough Examination of a Choking System, London, Panther Books Ltd.

Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (2008). The 2008 World Factbook. Cole M (1970), Education for Equality, Routledge, London and New York.

Combs AW (1979), Myths in Education: Beliefs that Hinder Progress and their Alternatives. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Erny P (1981), The Child and His Environment in Black Africa – An Essay on Traditional Education: translated, abridged, and adapted by Wanjohi, G. J., Oxford University Press.

Ferguson J (1999), Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt. Berkeley: California University Press.

Freire P (1985), The Politics of Education – Culture, Power, and Liberation, U.S.A., Macmillan Publishers Ltd.

Garcia M, Pence A, Evans JL (2008) (eds), Africa's Future, Africa's Challenge: Early Childhood Care and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa. Washington, DC: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.

Illich I (1971), Deschooling Society, New York: Harper and Row Publishers.

Jay PG, Marcus AW (2005), Education Myths. Rowman and Littlefied Publishers, Inc.

Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) (2002). Secondary Education Syllabus Volume 5 rev. ed.).Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau.

Leah E (1967), The Structural Study of Myth and Totemism, London, Tavistock Publications.

Ministry of Education (1975), Educational Structure in Kenya. Nairobi, Jomo Kenyatta Foundation.

Nation Master (2003-2008). Kenyan Education Statistics.

OECD (1979), Future Educational Policies in the Changing Social and Economic Context, Report of the Meeting of the OECD Education Committee at Ministerial Level, 19-20 October, 1978.

Otiende JE (1992), Education and Development in Kenya, Nairobi, Oxford University Press.

Poverty News Blog (2007). Kenya Economic Violence – Unemployment and Poverty are Human Rights Violation.

Shiundu JS, Omulando SJ (1992), Curriculum Theory and Practice, Nairobi, Oxford University Press.

Stopsky F (2008), Myth of Free Education in Kenya. The Impudent Observer. Word Press.

Swadener BB, Kabiru M, Njenga A (1997), Does the Village Still Raise the Child?: A Collaborative Study of Changing Childrearing in Kenya. Early Educ. Dev. 8 (3): 285-306.

Swadener BB, Kabiru M, Njenga A (2000), Does the Village Still Raise the Child?: A Collaborative Study of Changing Childrearing in Kenya. Early Education and Development Does the Village Still Raise the Child? A Collaborative Study of Changing Childrearing and Early Education in Kenya. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Taba H (1962), Curriculum Development, Harcourt, Brace and World Inc.: San Francisco.

Vavrus F (2002), Postcoloniality and English: Explaining Language Policy and the Politics of Development in Tanzania. TESOL Quarterly 36(3): 373-97.

World Bank (2001), A Chance to Learn: Knowledge and Finance for Education in Sub-Saharan Africa, Washington, DC: World Bank.